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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

REPORT

INFORMATION REPORT

CD NO.

COUNTRY USSR (Black Sea)

DATE DISTR. 3 July 1951

SUBJECT Port of Batumi

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SUPPLEMENT TO
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Harbor Facilities

1. The port of Batumi remains as it was before the war; no improvements or modifications of the port installations are in progress, and none seem even to be under consideration.
2. The port has only one pilot who embarks at about 200 meters from the entrance to the port. Pilotage is mandatory.
3. Within the port there are six mooring-buoys indicating the various mooring positions, as shown on the attached map. The ships at the quay must fasten cables to the buoys so that they can pull out quickly when strong southwest winds blow, as the winds frequently reach storm strength and cause a violent surf within the port which makes it impossible for ships to remain at the quay. When this takes place it is necessary to leave the port and ride at anchor in the roadstead.

4. The water is approximately ten meters deep at almost all points within the port, and therefore ships of any tonnage can dock at Batumi. The port of Batumi is used almost exclusively for petroleum traffic, but there is also a small trade in minerals, in manganese, and in furs which are sent only to other ports in the Soviet Union. the traffic is exclusively Soviet, and is between ports on the Black Sea. In addition to the crude petroleum which reaches the Batumi refineries through the pipe-line from Baku, crude petroleum is brought from the Rumanian port of Constanta, always on Soviet ships. At the present time, the greatest traffic is in gasoline, which is sent to Odessa at the rate of approximately 15,000 tons a day. The mooring positions for ships carrying gasoline are usually occupied by tankers with a capacity of 7,000 to 8,000 tons. Production probably does not greatly exceed this quantity, since some ships have had to stop loading with less gasoline than was foreseen, because of a lack of the product. There is a regular weekly line to Odessa from Batumi for freight and passengers.

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5. The quays for petroleum are at the north pier, where mooring positions one, two, and three are located, and at the east quay, where mooring positions four and five are located. Positions one, four, and five each have 20 tanks and are normally used only to refuel ships and to load small tanks weighing less than 500 tons.
At mooring positions one and five there are no tanks for gasoline, which can be loaded only at positions two, three, and four. Position five is undergoing a complete restoration and change of all tanks. Mooring positions two and three are important, and each has 40 tanks divided into two groups of 20 tanks each, of which one is for various types of naptha and diesel oil and the other for various types of gasoline and oil. The tanks are of various sizes to meet the loading requirements of each ship and the larger tanks can handle 1,000 tons per hour. The pumping takes place at a station located outside of the port but within the enclosure of the refineries right next to the port.
6. Each mooring position has a water intake for both drinking water and boilers. The water intakes can load seven or eight tons per hour. The south quay is used exclusively for merchant, passenger, and war ships. On this quay there are water intakes approximately every 50 meters.
7. Along the south and east quays warehouses and various storage rooms are located; in front of these is a track with two moveable cranes, each having a capacity of approximately three tons. The stationary crane indicated on the plan of the port does not exist.
8. Behind the warehouses run railroad tracks on which there are railway cars of approximately 30-ton capacity. There are also railway cars of a normal capacity.
9. The port is serviced by two military tug-boats, of which one was being overhauled at the naval shipyard. The other, which was moored at the south quay, is a Pluto tug-boat. There is also a civilian tug-boat of approximately 120 horsepower (sic).
10. In addition to the two cranes mentioned in Paragraph 7, there is a shear-leg pontoon of a capacity of 25 tons. There are also five lighters in port, each of a capacity of approximately 100 tons.
11. There is only one port agent for foreign ships, naturally a Government employee, and foodstuffs for foreign ships are drawn from State stores with a certificate issued by a State commissary. Theoretically the ships can acquire all kinds of supplies, but actually green vegetables and fish are not always available. In November and December 1950 the following prices prevailed:

White flour	- 3.60 rubles per Kg.
Pork	- 12 rubles per Kg.
Beef	- 6 rubles per Kg.
Poultry	- 14 rubles per Kg.

The rate of exchange is one dollar to four rubles, with payment in dollars.

Economic and Social Conditions in Batumi

12. At night the streets are almost entirely deserted and the few passers-by are very poorly dressed. The shop windows are empty and the few articles displayed are clearly of very poor quality. There are no price tags.
13. During the day the city is much the same as at night, few people on the streets, for the most part military. The shops are poor, and, although there are many schools, they are in poor condition.
14. Small private property is permitted; one can buy a house in which to live, and about a hectare of land on which it is permissible to keep a cow and a pig per family, whereas the number of poultry is limited (sic). It is permissible to buy private automobiles, which vary in price from 6,000 to 14,000 rubles, but there are few cars to be seen. More than 50 per cent of the homes have radio antennae on the roofs.

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15. The salaries of workmen vary from 400 to 1,000 rubles per month. The best paid categories are professors, artists, and engineers, whose salaries vary from 2,000 to 3,000 rubles per month. For engineers and scientists or inventors there are special awards which are given from time to time for inventions or technical applications which improve the productive capacity of industry.
16. The Catholic religion is forbidden, and the Catholic church is closed. The church is entirely surrounded by a wooden paling and is slowly going to ruin. One or more families live inside the church, and two pigs and some poultry are kept in the garden. On one side of the paling there is a small cement construction where there is a public latrine. The Moslem, Orthodox, and Hebrew religions are permitted, but there are very few worshipers.
17. There are no epidemic diseases in the Batumi area. Since the end of the war an energetic anti-malaria land reclamation program has been carried out, and malaria has almost completely disappeared.

Naval Installations

18. At the entrance to the roadstead of Batumi, from Cape Batumi to the first houses of the town, there is a small naval arsenal with a small quay for light military craft. There were 12 motor launches at this quay. Four are patrol boats, and have at the stern two chutes for anti-submarine mines and are armed with a twin-mounted heavy machine gun of approximately 20 mm. at the bow and a single one at the stern. These units are marked on the bow with a letter K, followed by a number. The smaller motor launches are used for coastal patrol and are armed with one heavy machine gun of about 13 mm. at the stern. They are marked on the bow with a letter H, followed by a number.
19. In front of the work shops of the small shipyard are a small ice-breaker of approximately 500 tons and a mine-layer.
20. There are usually two mine-layers in the port of Batumi. These units are of approximately 600 tons and have the following armament: One double-mounted heavy machine gun with protection shield, of approximately 37 mm, at the bow; one double-mounted heavy machine gun of the same caliber at the stern; two single heavy machine guns, of approximately 13 mm, on each side of the bridge; three single heavy machine guns, of approximately 20 mm, on a single mount, with the central machine gun placed at an elevation, and the guns on each side placed lower. Both of these ships are provided with a radio transmitter and radar. On each bridge is installed a small APG (sic). On the square stern there are two small cranes for mine-laying operations.
21. The boats are approximately 70 meters long and are easily recognizable because of their high superstructures which, from a distance, give them the appearance of large destroyers, and also because directly aft of the funnel there is a large iron framework formed by two vertical beams joined above by a horizontal beam, which constitutes a crane for quick launching of the only small boat on board, a motorboat. This framework is about ten meters long and is conspicuous at any distance and from every position except at a 180 degree angle.
22. During the night of 30 November a medium range submarine entered port and tied up at Number 4 naphtha pier, departing the same night. The submarine did not have a schnorkel. Because of the darkness other details could not be observed except for the usual gun in front of the conning tower.
23. The approaches to the port of Batumi are not mined; the waters are entirely free. The two mine layers in the port have continuously kept their personnel in readiness for mine laying operations, but have not undertaken any operations.
At the head of the petroleum dock (the north dock) there is an obstacle chain ready for use, but there is no sign either of mines or of explosive chains on the docks or in the sheds of the small arsenal.

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Surveillance

24. In addition to normal sentinels, along the whole coast from the airport to the other extremity of the bay and in the interior in the proximity of all industrial and military objectives there are observation towers constructed on trellises about ten meters in height on which platforms with sentry-boxes are mounted. All these sentinels are provided with binoculars mounted on tripods. One of these observation towers is situated at the base of the petroleum dock. All industrial establishments, storehouses, and warehouses are enclosed and guarded.

Artillery and Coastal Defense

25. There is no trace of any large artillery for coastal defense. From general conversations it was gathered that the area defense is concentrated against air attacks.
26. On a low hill just on the outskirts of the city and near another hill located at approximately a 190 degree angle from the beacon at the end of the petroleum pier and about one kilometer in a direct line from the beacon, there is a small radio transmission station. Not far from this, to the east, is located an anti-aircraft battery of small caliber guns, with a mobile radar, a searchlight, and a diffuser(sic). The battery is of four pieces, arranged along the crest of the hill.

Airfield and Military Headquarters

27. The airport is situated to the west of the city on the plain near the Chorokh River. From afar 14 fighter planes were counted on the field. One plane was in flight. They were very fast single-engine monoplanes. The same field is used for civilian aircraft, which consist of two old, slow, wood and canvas biplanes. These planes, in addition to being used for the transportation of State passengers (functionaries and employees of the refineries), are also used for reconnaissance flights over the pipe line. On the plateaus immediately to the west of the field there are several large camouflaged hangars, which are also visible from the sea.
28. No troop movements were noted in the port or in the city. An artillery division headquarters and an air division headquarters are located in Batumi.

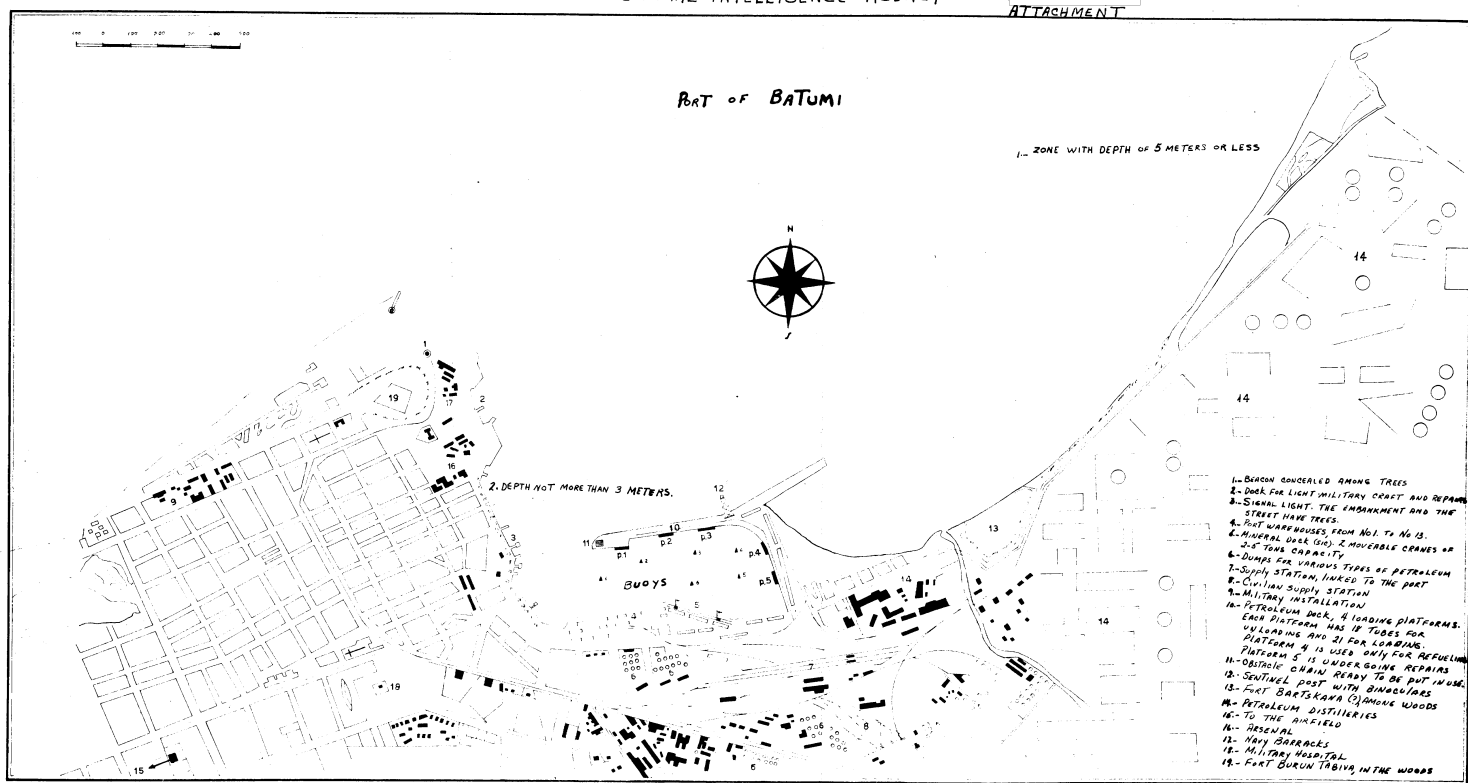
Petroleum Refineries

29. The petroleum refineries, as they appear on the attached plan, have been notably enlarged, and extend for more than two km to the east of the city. It was not possible to count the number of tanks, which number more than 100. The tanks marked on the sketch are service tanks for loading ships. An enormous number of new tanks, which are used for storage of crude petroleum, extend into the zone of the new distilleries to the east of the city. On the surrounding hills there are several large camouflaged tanks which are hidden among the trees and which evidently are to be used as a reserve in case the distilleries should be bombed.

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ATTACHMENT

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